

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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- Sub 2
1. A method of distributing data for use in a catalog, comprising:
capturing product data for a product according to a data model, the data model
having one or more classes, each one of the one or more classes being defined by one
or more categories, each of the one or more categories being defined by an attribute
group having one or more attributes; and
storing the product data, wherein the stored product data is suitable for use in
10 an electronic catalog;
receiving a set of language selections indicating one or more languages in
which the product data is to be transmitted; and
providing the product data in the one or more languages.
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2. The method as recited in claim 1, further including:
indicating one or more languages in which the product and documentation
associated with the product are available.
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3. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein providing the product data in the
one or more languages comprises:
providing a translation for one or more of the attributes associated with the
product.
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4. The method as recited in claim 3, wherein providing a translation for one or
more of the attributes associated with the product comprises:
providing a translation associated with one or more values associated with the
one or more attributes, and
providing a translation associated with one or more units associated with the
one or more attributes.
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5. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein providing the product data in the
one or more languages comprises:

providing a translation for at least one of a class, a category, an attribute group, and an attribute associated with the product.

5 6. A method of capturing data for use in a catalog, comprising:
classifying a product according to a data model having one or more classes,
wherein each of the classes is arranged to identify one or more associated categories
and each of the categories is arranged to identify an associated attribute group having
one or more attributes, each attribute having an associated possible value list that
identifies values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute;
10 selecting at least one of the values in the associated possible value list for
selected attributes in the associated attribute group;
inputting the selected values for the product to the system product data file;
and
inputting to the system product data file one or more languages in which the
15 product and documentation associated with the product are available.

20 7. A method of distributing catalog data stored in a system product data file,
comprising:
receiving a customer profile that identifies customer searchable attribute
preferences that specify attributes for which values are to be transmitted;
obtaining attribute values for the specified attributes from the system product
data file;
receiving one or more language selections identifying one or more languages
in which the data is requested; and
25 generating a vocabulary file in the one or more languages based upon the
specified attributes for which attribute values were obtained.

30 8. A method of querying a catalog database over the Internet, the method
comprising:
accepting a user query, the user query including a customer SKU associated
with a product, a language selection in which information associated with the product
is desired, and a component request that requests a component associated with the
product, wherein the component is at least one of a product description, technical

specifications, a marketing description, an image, and a URL associated with the product;

retrieving the component associated with the component request; and
producing the component.

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9. A data structure suitable for use in collecting, distributing or storing product data for use in a catalog, the data structure being based on a data model having one or more classes, wherein each of the classes has one or more associated categories, the data structure being embodied in a computer readable medium and comprising:

at least one class definition, each class definition being arranged to identify one or more associated categories;

a plurality of category definitions, each category definition being arranged to identify an associated attribute group; and

a plurality of attribute group definitions, each attribute group definition being arranged to identify one or more attributes that are associated with the attribute group, each attribute having an associated possible value list that identifies values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute;

wherein each of the attributes is associated with a language dependent indicator that indicates availability of a translation of record data associated with the corresponding attribute when the language dependent indicator is in a predefined state.

10. A data structure suitable for use in collecting, distributing or storing product data for use in a catalog, the data structure being based on a data model having one or more classes, wherein each of the classes has one or more associated categories, the data structure being embodied in a computer readable medium and comprising:

at least one class definition, each class definition being arranged to identify one or more associated categories;

a plurality of category definitions, each category definition being arranged to identify an associated attribute group;

a plurality of attribute group definitions, each attribute group definition being arranged to identify one or more attributes that are associated with the attribute group, each attribute having an associated possible value list that identifies values that are

selectable as values for the associated attribute; and

a translation table including a translation associated with one or more of the category definitions.

11. The data structure as recited in claim 10, wherein the translation includes a translation in one or more languages of at least one of a class, a category, an attribute group, and an attribute associated with one or more of the plurality of category definitions.

12. The data structure as recited in claim 10, wherein each attribute has an associated possible unit list that identifies units that are selectable as values for the associated attribute, wherein the translation includes a translation in one or more languages of at least one of the values and the units that are selectable for the associated attribute.

13. A data structure suitable for use in collecting, distributing, or storing product data for a plurality of products, the product data being suitable for use in a catalog, the products being classified according to a data model having one or more classes, wherein each of the classes is arranged to identify one or more associated categories and each of the categories is arranged to identify an associated attribute group having one or more attributes, each attribute having an associated possible value list that identifies values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute, the data structure being embodied in a computer readable medium and comprising:

a plurality of system SKUs, each system SKU being arranged to identify one of the plurality of products;

a plurality of manufacturer SKUs, each manufacturer SKU being associated with one of the plurality of system SKUs;

an attribute table in which selected attributes for each of the products are stored, each of the selected attributes being identified by the corresponding system SKU and having at least one of the values in the associated possible value list; and

a languages table indicating one or more languages in which each one of the plurality of products and documentation associated with each one of the plurality of products are available.